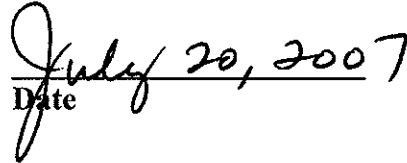

Approved for Release
Deborah A. Jefferson
Director for Human Resources
Management


Date

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) BULLETIN #068, FY 07

SUBJECT: Student Career Experience Program (SCEP)

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon release of this HR Bulletin

EXPIRATION DATE: Effective until canceled or superseded

SUPERSEDES: HR Bulletin # 010, FY 05

BACKGROUND: The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issued final regulations, effective May 11, 2006, allowing up to 320 hours of certain non-Federal job related work-study experience to be credited toward the minimum requirement for conversion to a permanent appointment under SCEP. It also allows for up to 320 hours of the minimum service requirement to be waived if the student has completed 320 hours of career-related work experience, and has demonstrated high potential, and exceptional job performance.

Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 213.3202(b) designates SCEP, formerly referred to as Co-operative Education Program, as an excepted service appointment under Schedule B, and public notice is not required. The regulation defines what a student is and the eligibility criteria for student appointments under SCEP. The regulation also outlines the components of the formal agreement between the agency, school, and student; and describes eligibility criteria for noncompetitive conversion to the competitive service (term, career, or career-conditional appointments) upon students' satisfactory completion of diploma, degree, or certificate program requirements, and 640 hours of career-related work experience.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this HR Bulletin is to implement Federal Register, April 11, 2006, (Volume 71, Number 69), effective May 11, 2006; and Title 5, CFR § 213.3202(b)(11)(i)(A).

COVERAGE: This HR Bulletin applies to all SCEP appointments within the Department.

POLICY: The SCEP permits agencies to appoint students to excepted service positions where they gain work experience related to their academic study. Students in the SCEP may be enrolled as full-time or part-time degree-seeking students. When the student completes the requirements of their academic diploma, certificate, or degree, and at least 640 hours of career-related work experience acquired through a Federal work-study program, they may be noncompetitively converted to a term, career-conditional, or career appointment under Executive Order 12015 (as amended by Executive Order 13024). This conversion must be made within 120 days after satisfactory completion of their academic requirements.

Operating Units, upon approval from the Director for Human Resources Management, may credit up to 320 hours of **career-related** work experience acquired through a comparable non-Federal work-study program, military experience, or previous Federal appointment in accordance with 5 CFR § 213.3102(r). Creditable experience **must** be related to the student's target position or career field. The following non-Federal career-related work experience can be credited toward the 640 hours:

- Experience obtained through working in, but not for, a Federal agency, under a formal work-study agreement comparable to the SCEP agreement between an agency and an accredited academic institution. This includes, but is not limited to, an internship, stipend and grant program, and student volunteer service as defined by 5 CFR part 308, and service performed under 5 CFR § 213.3102(r); and/or
- Experience obtained through working in, but not for, a Federal agency, under a formal written contract comparable to the SCEP agreement between an agency and an organization providing internship experience to students; and/or
- Active duty military service experience, including active duty training, National Guard, and Reserves, as defined in 5 U.S.C. 2101, performed while in school or prior to enrollment, provided the student was discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions.

In addition to receiving credit for non-Federal work-study experience, Operating Units, upon approval, may waive up to 320 hours of the 640 hour minimum service requirement if a student enrolled in an accredited college or university completes 320 hours of career-related work experience under a SCEP appointment and has demonstrated high potential, as evidenced by outstanding academic achievement¹, and exceptional job performance. A student's GPA can be rounded up to one decimal point in accordance with OPM's Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions. Exceptional job performance must be documented by a formal evaluation in accordance with Departmental Administrative Order 202-430, Performance Management System. A student may be

¹ Overall GPA of 3.50 or better, on a 4.0 scale; standing in the top 10 percent of graduating class; and/or induction into a nationally-recognized scholastic honor society.

evaluated after 320 hours of service under a SCEP appointment, when the student demonstrates outstanding academic achievement.

Operating Units may use multiple sources such as comparable work-study programs, experience gained in the armed forces, and exceptional job performance and academic excellence to credit an individual up to 320 hours for non-SCEP experience.

These new flexibilities must be implemented with sufficient rigor as to ensure that the experience and/or performance credited to interns meets the program's intent, bringing high quality, well-educated graduates into the federal workforce.

WHEN TO USE: SCEP can be a good tool to “grow your own” workforce by hiring students into developmental positions to address future agency needs.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Criteria for eligibility for the SCEP include:

- Enrollment or accepted for enrollment as a degree-seeking student in an accredited high school, technical, or vocational school; 2 year or 4 year college or university; or graduate or professional college or university.
- Student is at least 16 years old.
- Student is taking at least a half-time course load as determined by the academic institution.

BENEFITS TO THE HIRING MANAGER: Hiring under SCEP is an effective way for a manager to:

- Bring students into the agency in targeted positions for workforce and succession planning.
- Evaluate the student's performance in real work situations.
- Permanently place successful students upon completion of coursework leading to a diploma, certificate, or degree by permitting the crediting of up to 320 hours of the required 640 hours of job-related experience gained in non-Federal formal work-study programs, or by waiving up to 320 hours for outstanding academic achievement and exceptional job performance.

APPROVAL PROCESS: Requests to credit up to 320 hours of non-Federal work-related experience toward the required 640 hours, and requests to waive up to 320 hours of the 640 hours based on outstanding academic achievement and exceptional job performance must be approved by the Director for Human Resources Management.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION:

Crediting non-Federal work-study program experience: Human Resources Directors must submit a copy of the student's applicable formal work-study agreement; formal written contract; or Form DD-214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty; along with a written description of the duties the student performed and how the duties relate to their target position or career field. In addition, the documentation must state how many hours, up to 320, of career-related work experience are being waived.

Demonstrated high potential and exceptional job performance: Human Resources Directors must submit proof of outstanding academic achievement via an official college/university transcript, evidence of student standing in the top 10 percent of graduating class, and/or induction into a nationally-recognized scholastic honor society. In addition, a formal performance evaluation in accordance with Departmental Administrative Order 202-430, Performance Management System, must be submitted, along with a statement of how many hours, up to 320, are being credited.

REFERENCES: 5 CFR Part 213, § 213.3202(b)

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